

## Grade 9 Overview

# Focus: Responsible Citizenship

*This unit deals with the idea that citizens of a democracy have both rights and duties or responsibilities. The lessons for this unit are interdisciplinary and might be used in a number of subject areas, including English/Language Arts, Social Studies, and Health and Safety education. Although they are designed for ninth grade, they can be adapted for other levels.*

### ***Key Ideas:***

- Citizens must balance their right to individual liberties with their responsibility for the common good.
- The community depends on each citizen to participate in maintaining the health and safety of family and community members.
- Since many people share responsibility in most activities, it is important that all parties take their duties seriously.
- Citizens have the responsibility to evaluate sources of information and to keep themselves informed.

### ***Key Connections to Citizenship Education:***

Good citizens:

- respect themselves.
- take responsibility for obligations to family and community.

### ***Lessons:***

1. *Rights and Responsibilities: The Citizenship Balancing Act*
2. *Obligations to the Community*
3. *Who is Responsible?*
4. *Using TV and Media Responsibly*

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### ***Culminating Activity:***

As a culminating project, students might take the responsibility to research a community or school topic, particularly one related to community health and safety needs or other common concerns. Students might use local newspapers and other sources and present their findings to the student council or a local government council or board.

### ***Curriculum Connections:***

Activities in this unit will help students to attain academic standards in:

#### ***Social Studies (Grade 9) - Students will:***

- understand the impact of historical events, personalities, movements, and technological developments on the present and the future.
- understand and analyze the political ideas and practices that enable citizens to make informed choices in a democratic society.
- draw conclusions and make decisions based on relevant data derived from a variety of resources and media, including electronic technology.
- develop a commitment to the civic values needed to function responsibly in a democratic society.

#### ***English/Language Arts (Grades 9-12) - Students will:***

- work collaboratively to generate ideas and solve problems.
- express and substantiate their own ideas.
- comprehend developmentally appropriate materials including a broad variety of literature, magazines, newspapers, routine business documents, and reference materials.
- synthesize information from a variety of sources.
- distinguish between objective and subjective presentations of information and events.

#### ***Health and Safety (Grades 9-12) - Students will:***

- perceive the potential for hazards and accidents in any environment and the application of preventive and emergency procedures. (Topics include attitudes about safety, accident prevention, safety rules, laws/regulations, and occupational safety.)

## Grade 9 Lesson One

# Rights and Responsibilities: The Citizenship Balancing Act

*This lesson helps students to understand that people have both responsibilities to the community and individual rights. In a democracy, it is important to maintain a balance between rights and responsibilities.*

Adapted from “Citizenship,” a lesson plan from *The Encyclopedia of Democracy*, Congressional Quarterly Books online,  
<<http://books.cq.com/freeResources/lessons/lessons1.htm>>

### ***Curriculum Connections:***

Social Studies (Civics, U.S. Government), English/Language Arts.

### ***Key Idea:***

In a democracy, citizens must balance their right to individual liberties with their responsibilities to others and to the common good.

### ***Key Connections to Citizenship Education:***

Good citizens:

- take personal responsibility for obligations to family and community.

### ***Objectives:***

Students will:

- identify both the rights and responsibilities that citizens of a democracy possess.
- give examples of the need for a balance between individual rights and responsibility for the common good.

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### ***Introductory Activity:***

Write the terms rights, responsibilities, and the common good on the board. Elicit from the class names, words, and ideas associated with these terms. Ask students: What rights and responsibilities do citizens in a democracy have? What is a citizen's role in a democracy? How does being a citizen of a country differ from being a member of a family, a class, or a school?

### ***Core Activities:***

1. Divide the class into groups and ask each group to draw up a list of rights for students in the class or school. (Students might refer to the Bill of Rights to the Constitution of the United States and other sources.)
2. After groups have generated their lists of rights, have them go through a similar process to develop a list of responsibilities.
3. Bring the groups together to come to consensus about a single list of rights and responsibilities.
4. With the class, use the list of rights and responsibilities and the "Balancing Rights and Responsibilities" handout to diagram rights that students have as individuals and the responsibilities they have to the school community, the "common good."
5. Help students to examine the following questions: Are there items that overlap? For example, is voting for student leaders a right, a responsibility, or both? Is there tension or conflict between specific rights and specific responsibilities? Do tensions of this sort exist not only in a school community, but also in society in general? To what extent is this tension an unavoidable aspect of a modern democracy? Can this tension have a positive effect? What would happen if students in a school community or American citizens failed to carry out specific responsibilities? Why is it important to maintain a balance between rights and responsibilities in a democracy?

### ***Additional Ideas:***

1. Have students use a newspaper or magazine to identify a current issue or event in which the need to balance individual rights and responsibilities is important. For example, the issue of whether TV news cameras should be allowed in courtrooms is a question of balancing the right of an individual to a fair trial with freedom of the press, the right and responsibility that the news media has to report the news.
2. Have students research the process for becoming a naturalized citizen of the United States and develop a chart showing the various steps in the process. Invite a person who is a naturalized citizen to discuss the process of becoming a citizen and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

***Evaluation/Assessment:***

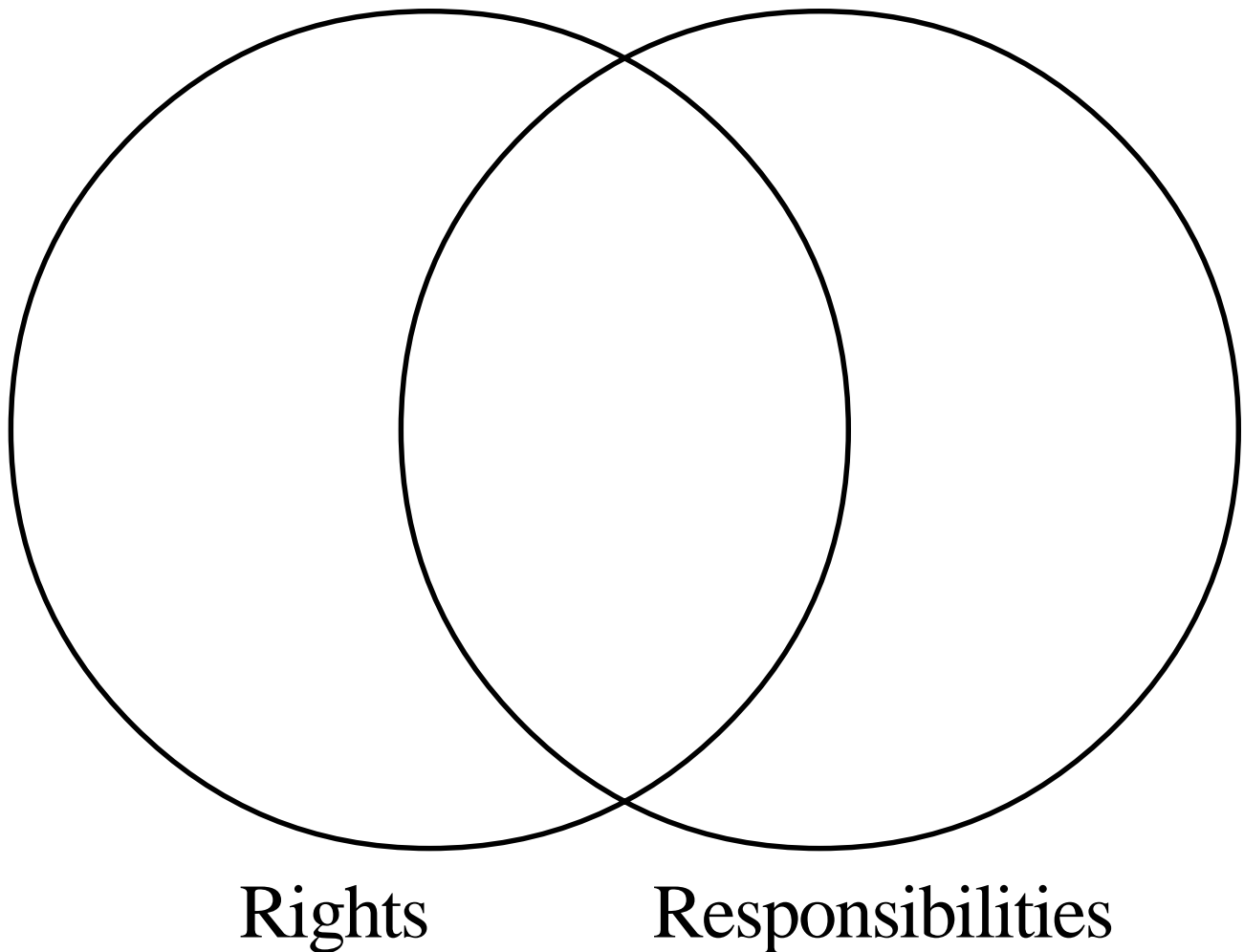
After taking part in group activities, each student will use the “Balancing Rights and Responsibilities” handout to diagram the rights and responsibilities of an American citizen.

***Resources:***

- Handout: "Balancing Rights and Responsibilities"
- The Bill of Rights to the Constitution of the United States
- Newspapers, news magazines, encyclopedias, and other reference books
- “Citizenship,” a lesson plan from the *Encyclopedia Of Democracy*, Congressional Quarterly Books, <<http://books.cq.com/freeResources/Lessons/lessons1.htm>> (To order materials from Congressional Quarterly Books, call 1-800-638-1710.)

# BALANCING RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The French political philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau believed that a citizen of a republic should place the common good above individual self interest. Why is it important for a democracy to establish a balance between individual rights and the responsibilities or obligations of a citizen? Use the diagram below to chart a citizen's rights and responsibilities. Do some rights and responsibilities overlap? Can some things be both rights and responsibilities?



## Grade 9 Lesson Two

# Obligations to the Community

*Using an example from Indiana history, this lesson emphasizes that individuals are responsible for the safety of family and community members. For this reason, it is important to respect and follow safety regulations.*

### ***Curriculum Connections:***

English/Language Arts, Social Studies (Civics, U.S. Government, U.S. History, Indiana History), Health and Safety Education.

### ***Key Ideas:***

- The community depends on each citizen to participate in maintaining the health and safety of the community.
- Citizens in Indiana have shared the responsibility for community safety throughout our history.

### ***Key Connections to Citizenship Education:***

Good citizens:

- take personal responsibility for obligations to family and community.
- respect authority.

### ***Objectives:***

Students will:

- compare two laws from 1821 and 1991 that describe how the community relies on individual citizens to maintain health and safety.
- recognize that Hoosier citizens have taken responsibility to uphold community safety since the beginning of our state.

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### ***Introductory Activity:***

Take this opportunity to review fire drill procedures and fire regulations for the school with students. Ask what other safety laws or regulations they are aware of in public places, like theaters, auditoriums, or sports arenas; on streets and highways; at home. Why is it important to respect and follow safety regulations? What authorities are responsible for establishing and enforcing these laws? What would we do if we didn't have such laws or anyone to enforce them?

### ***Core Activities:***

1. Have students read or read to them the two Jeffersonville laws from 1819 and 1821. Then answer the following questions:
  - a. Why were these laws important to the citizens of Jeffersonville at the time?
  - b. Was Indiana a state when the 1819 law was passed?
  - c. Where did the Trustees of Jeffersonville want to store the fire ladders?
  - d. Why didn't they store the ladders at a fire station?
  - e. Who pays to provide fire stations today?
  - f. What was the purpose of having a leather bucket available at each house?
  - g. Was it fair to require every citizen to buy a leather bucket? Why didn't the city buy one for each household?
2. Have students read the Smoke Detector Law from 1991. Then answer the following questions:
  - a. How many smoke detectors does the law say must be in each dwelling?
  - b. In what two ways can the smoke detectors get electrical power?
  - c. Who is responsible for installing the smoke detectors?
  - d. Who is responsible for testing and maintaining a smoke detector to keep it in operational condition?
  - e. Who is responsible for repairing a smoke detector after written notification of the need for repair is given?
  - f. Within how many days must the repair be made?
  - g. What is the only legal reason to remove a smoke detector?
  - h. What charge is brought against persons who violate the smoke detector law?
3. Compare the Jeffersonville laws of 1819 and 1821 and the 1991 smoke detector law by answering the following questions:
  - a. Do both laws expect citizens to carry out responsibilities to help the community? What responsibilities are expected? What purpose do these responsibilities serve?
  - b. Do you believe the laws have saved property damage?
  - c. Do you believe the laws have saved lives?
  - d. Which law would be easier to enforce? Why?



***Additional Ideas:***

1. Ask students to figure out the approximate cost of a leather bucket in 1821 by analyzing the Jeffersonville ordinance itself. Was this a burden for a family of the time? How does this compare with the cost of a smoke detector today?
2. Ask students to apply citizen responsibilities and obligations to a new issue: the requirement to wear seat belts in private cars. How similar is this issue to the smoke detector requirement? Discuss the question: Do individual actions, such as wearing seat belts, affect public safety?

***Evaluation/Assessment:***

Have students write a paragraph about how the old and new laws are similar, and a second paragraph about how the laws are different. Students should end by stating their opinion on whether responsibilities expected of citizens have been expanded or reduced since 1821 and list some of the responsibilities that they have for their personal safety and that of others. Students will be evaluated based on the written paragraph comparing the old and new laws.

***Home Connections:***

With parental permission, students might take responsibility for helping to maintain home safety features, such as smoke detectors, or for developing a fire escape plan and discussing it with their families.

***Resources:***

Handouts: 1) “Two Laws from Jeffersonville, Indiana” and 2) “Smoke Detectors in Indiana Dwellings”

# TWO LAWS FROM JEFFERSONVILLE, INDIANA

Indiana Historical Bureau  
*BROADSIDES, The Early Years*  
Document 49 P

[November 24, 1819]

At a Meeting of the Trustees of the town of Jeffersonville on Wednesday the 24th of Nov. 1819--Present Samuel Gwathmey William Bowman & John Bigelow Ordered that Mr. Bigelow be authorized to cause to be made for the use of the Town three Ladders to be used in case of Fire one to be kept at his house one at Mr. Wm Bowmans & the other at Dr. Meriwethers with strict injunctions that said ladders are only to be used by the Citizens in case of Fire-Also three fire hooks with handles to be annexed to & distributed with the Ladders at the several places mentioned.

[May 23, 1821]

Be it further Ordained that it shall be the duty of every free holder residing within the Town of Jeffersonville to procure and keep for the use of the town at least one good water proof leather fire-Bucket to be used in cases of fire-and every free-holder failing the furnish such Bucket within three Months from this date shall be fined the sum of three Dollars.

## Background

Jeffersonville, Indiana, was platted in 1802 based on a plan designed by Thomas Jefferson. The government of Jeffersonville was invested in a town board of trustees; this system endured until 1839 when Jeffersonville was incorporated as a city. This town was like several other western cities in that its own government predated the establishment of state government. The town board members were elected officials. The ordinances that they passed reflect the growth of the village and their priorities for its public welfare.

Fire was a preeminent concern for any growing community. Maintaining a fire department was an expense most small towns could not afford, so householders were drafted to man the bucket brigades. Towns required householders to provide fire buckets, which were generally the cheapest and only means of transporting water from rivers or wells to the fire. Though great care was taken, few cities escaped a great destructive blaze throughout their early history. (Wade, Richard. *The Urban Frontier*. (1959) Chicago: University of Chicago press, pages 91-94.)

*Handout*

# SMOKE DETECTORS IN INDIANA DWELLINGS

Indiana Code

Abstracted from Public Law 176 (1991)

22-11-18-3.5 Installation of Smoke Detectors in Dwellings

SECTION 3.5 (a) This section only applies to dwellings. . .

- c. A dwelling must have at least one (1) functional smoke detector. . .
- d. All smoke detectors must be:
  - 1. battery operated or hard wired into the dwelling's electrical system;
  - 2. accessible for serving and testing; and
  - 3. maintained and at least one (1) time every six (6) months tested by the occupant to ensure that the smoke detector is in operational condition.
- e. Each owner or the manager or rental agent of the owner is responsible for:
  - 1. the installation of a required smoke detector; and
  - 2. the replacement and repair of a required smoke detector within seven (7) working days after the owner, manager, or rental agent is given written notification of the need to replace or repair the smoke detector.
- f. A person may not tamper with or remove a smoke detector except when necessary for maintenance purposes.

## 22-11-18-5 VIOLATIONS; OFFENSES

- (c ) A person who violates section 3.5 of this chapter commits a Class D infraction.



## Grade 9 Lesson Three

# Who Is Responsible?

*This lesson emphasizes the idea that individuals have personal responsibilities in real-life situations at home and at work. Among the responsibilities that individuals have is for their own safety as well as the safety of others.*

Adapted with permission. *Foundations of Democracy: Authority, Privacy, Responsibility, and Justice*, Level V. Copyright 1993, Center for Civic Education, Calabasas, CA, pp. 152-160.

### ***Curriculum Connections:***

Health and Safety, English/Language Arts, Social Studies (Civics, U.S. Government, Law Education)

### ***Key Ideas:***

- Since many people share responsibility in most activities, it is important that all parties take their duties seriously.
- Determining who is responsible in any situation is complex and requires thoughtful analysis regarding all parties involved.

### ***Key Connections to Citizenship Education:***

Good citizens:

- take personal responsibility for obligations to family and community.
- always do their personal best.

### ***Objectives:***

Students will:

- explain positions regarding who should be considered responsible in two hypothetical situations.
- explain three reasons for wanting to determine who should be considered responsible for a particular situation.
- apply five analytical questions to make a decision about responsibility in a hypothetical situation.

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### ***Introductory Activity:***

Ask students to discuss the following situation with a study partner and to be prepared to explain answers to the questions that follow:

#### *The Collision:*

Early one morning Charlotte was driving her small sports car down a narrow, residential street. Just then, George backed his station wagon out of his driveway into the path of the sports car. He could not see the oncoming car because a large moving van parked on the street blocked his vision. Charlotte was distracted by a cat running across the road and didn't notice the station wagon until it was too late. The cars crashed.

*What do you think?*

1. Who should be held responsible for this collision?
2. How did you make your decision? What things did you consider?

### ***Core Activities:***

1. After discussing the collision and the two follow-up questions, ask the class why it can be useful to be able to determine responsibility. Three ideas should emerge from the discussion. We might want to decide who is responsible in order to:
  - a. reward a person for a positive act he or she has done.
  - b. penalize a person for a wrong he or she has caused.
  - c. guide our own actions in the future.
2. Discuss the first steps in determining responsibility as (1) clarifying the event for which responsibility is being determined, and (2) clarifying who is involved that might be considered responsible. In the story above, the event to be analyzed is an automobile accident. Those involved included:
  - a. Charlotte, the driver of the sports car.
  - b. George, the driver of the station wagon.
  - c. the person who parked the moving van that blocked George's view.
  - d. the person who let out the cat that distracted Charlotte.
3. Next, ask students to apply five questions to help determine responsibility:
  - a. Cause - How might each person be considered to have caused the event?
  - b. Duty - Did the person's conduct fail to fulfill a duty or obligation he or she had?
  - c. State of mind - What was the person's state of mind when the event happened?

Four factors to think about here include:

- intent - did the person intentionally cause the event?

- recklessness - was the person who caused the event reckless?
  - carelessness - was the person who caused the event careless?
  - knowledge of consequences. Did the person know the probable results of their actions?
- d. Control - Did the person have control over their actions? Did they have a choice?
- e. Interests - Did the person have more important interests or concerns that caused them to act as they did? (e.g., swerving to avoid a child)
4. Ask students to apply these questions to determine who is responsible in the following situation.

Mary and her friend Lupe were talking in the lunch line. Tom, who was in line in front of them, received his lunch and turned to leave. Just then, Mary bumped Lupe who fell against Tom who dropped his lunch. Lupe claimed Mary bumped her on purpose. Mary said it was a mistake, and that she had slipped. Who should be considered responsible for the accident?

***Additional Activity:***

Form small groups to write new scenarios where responsibility is unclear. Exchange stories among groups for analysis using the questions above.

***Evaluation/Assessment:***

Given a new scenario (see Handout), each student will apply the five analytical questions to help determine responsibility. Responses may be given orally, in writing, or through a graphic organizer, such as a chart.

***Home Connection:***

Using newspapers and magazines at home, students might find a current situation where responsibility is in dispute. Students may wish to discuss the situation with family members, before bringing the article to class for a discussion.

***Resources:***

Handout: Scenario - "Who is responsible?"

## SCENARIO — Who is Responsible?

*An accident on the job.*

On June 16, James Olson cut his right arm in an accident on his job. He was working with a new table saw at Beamer's Carpentry Shop. It was a serious cut, and his medical expenses were high. After the accident, the health insurance investigator interviewed a number of people at the carpentry shop and collected the following information:

At the time of the accident, James Olson was using the saw to cut eight-foot lengths of redwood. Olson was a skilled saw operator. However, it was his habit to run the saw without a blade guard. The purpose of the blade guard is to shield the saw operator from the saw blade. A company rule required the blade guard to be used, but Olson claimed the guard just got in his way. He was not using it on the day of the accident.

Nick Greeley is a forklift operator at Beamer's. On the day of the accident, he was operating his forklift near James Olson's saw. Greeley accidentally backed into the saw causing it to suddenly slide toward Olson. Nick Greeley admitted that he had not been feeling well that day, but did not take a day off work because he had been told that he was missing too much work lately. He was afraid that if he took a sick day he would lose his job.

Bill Beamer is the owner and shop manager at Beamer's. He had made the decision to buy this particular saw from Shop Machinery, Inc. The saw was delivered with instructions for bolting the table to the floor. Bill Beamer didn't bother to bolt the saw down. He assumed that the weight of the saw alone was enough to hold it steady.

Grace del Campo is an inspector for Shop Machinery, Inc. It is her job to follow up on each piece of machinery sold to be sure that it has been properly installed and is working correctly. Three days before the accident, Grace was scheduled to check the saw at Beamer's. She was in a hurry to complete her inspections that day because she was leaving on vacation right after work. Since she was only going to be gone a week, she decided to go to Beamer's as soon as she got back. She did not inspect the saw before the accident.

*What do you think?*

Prepare an oral, written, or graphic analysis explaining who you think should be held responsible for the injuries to James Olson. Make sure you include the following information: What were the jobs of the various persons mentioned in this scenario? What responsibilities does each of those jobs involve? What responsibilities did each of these persons fail to carry out? Why? What were the consequences?



## Grade 9 Lesson Four

# Using TV and Media Responsibly

*In this lesson, students learn to recognize the differences in television and other news media and consider their responsibilities for evaluating and using information.*

### ***Curriculum Connections:***

English/Language Arts, Social Studies

### ***Key Idea:***

- Citizens have the responsibility to evaluate sources of information and keep themselves informed.

### ***Key Connections to Citizenship Education:***

Good citizens:

- respect themselves.
- take responsibility for obligations to family and community.

### ***Objectives:***

Students will:

- separate the TV world from reality. Students will recognize that language used on TV is not always appropriate in other settings, such as the school or workplace.
- identify the advantages and disadvantages of various types of information media, including television, radio, newspapers, news magazines, and on-line news sources.
- explain why it is important for citizens to be well-informed.
- give examples of things that students can do to keep themselves informed.

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### ***Introductory Activity:***

Ask students to name their favorite TV shows. Discuss whether these programs are realistic or not. Is the behavior, language, and dress seen on these programs acceptable at school or work?

### ***Core Activities:***

1. Have students estimate the number of hours of TV viewing they do per week. Mention statistics that indicate that young people watch 25 to 40 hours of TV per week. How does this compare to the number of hours they spend at school?
2. Discuss alternative ways of entertaining oneself and of getting information. Help students identify different types of news media, including television, radio, newspapers, news magazines, and on-line news. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each as information sources?
3. Working in small groups have students develop charts comparing the advantages and disadvantages of two types of media, such as a) television/radio; b) newspapers/news magazines; c) on-line news/television; d) newspapers/television. Ask students to consider issues such as speed of reporting, convenience or accessibility, accuracy, objectivity, amount of space or time available for researching and reporting the news, amount of in-depth analysis available, etc. Each group should report its findings to the class.
4. Present students with this quote from Thomas Jefferson: “Whenever people are well informed, they can be trusted with their own government.” Ask students to explain this statement and to consider their responsibilities as consumers of information. As a class, generate a list of things that students can do to be well-informed. Some students might want to prepare the list and the Thomas Jefferson quote as posters for the classroom.

### ***Additional Ideas:***

1. Students could create a newsletter about their community or school.
2. Secure newspapers from other English-speaking countries. Have students compare the content with newspapers from the United States regarding coverage of disasters, scandals, opinion columns, photographs, or sports.
3. Students might compare the coverage of a major news story on local and national television news, on CNN, in the local newspaper, and in a large city newspaper.
4. Students might compare the coverage of a major news story in different types of media: television, radio, newspapers, news magazines, and on-line sources.

***Evaluation/Assessment:***

Evaluation of students can be based upon an exercise in which students match different types of news media with their respective advantages and disadvantages. Students, also, might maintain journals recording their efforts to stay informed on a specific topic or issue over a period of time.

***Home Connection:***

With parental encouragement, students could be challenged to turn off the TV for one whole week and then to describe other activities they did instead. Some students might want to take responsibility for a family newsletter to share with relatives and family friends.

***Resources:***

- Newspapers, news magazines, television and radio broadcasts, and on-line news services.
- The Newspaper in Education (NIE) program provides materials for using the newspaper in the classroom. Contact your newspaper to see if there is a local NIE program or call NIE at 317-633-1010 or 1-800-669-7827.
- Library microfiche, local travelers, and international students can be a source of international newspapers. Foreign newspapers also can be requested through NIE.

